

cantemusnews

Cantemus Chamber Chorus Biannual Newsletter

Vol. 4 / No. 2 • November 2002



CANTEMUS
Small Chorus, Grand Sound.

Cantemus Chamber Chorus

Sopranos

Claire Cayot
Louise Cramer
Angela Drougas
Katy Fickenwirth
Donna Gale
Shea Mavros
Pamela Morris
Susan Nash
Michele O'Connor
Bettina Turner

Altos

Debra Basile
Pat Lowery Collins
Nancy Gilbert
Betsy Lebel
Priscilla March
Dorothy Monnelly
Marjorie Short
Marcia Siegel
Debby Twining

Tenors

Chris Barker
Jamie Cabot
Nicolas Fiszman
Gary Freeman
Bill Gilbert
Mark Pierce

Basses

Richard Blumenscheid
Bob Chase
Michael Fosburg
Bill Gelwick
Doug Guy
Todd Herrmann
Nat Pulsifer
Richard Salandrea

Music Director

John Hoffacker

Accompanist

Robert Littlefield

Cantemus Chamber Chorus

P.O. Box 784
Ipswich, MA 01938

Toll free information
1-888-CHORUS-1

www.cantemus.org



John Hoffacker,
Music Director

We Need to Dance

It's no wonder that in the holiday season we feel like dancing. In the winter we celebrate humankind's oldest holiday, a festival of days of increasing sunlight. In the fourth century, the Christian church began to celebrate Christmas on December 25, adapting a Roman holiday that in turn was built on ancient traditions of celebrating the Solstice.

In 1223, St. Francis of Assisi began the practice of worshipping at a manger scene, and the holiday became a celebration of hope and tenderness, symbolized by the birth of a baby and a family's love.

We need the warmth of these feelings to sustain us in the winter, but we also need to dance – at least in spirit! The word we use for Christmas songs, *carols*, comes from an old French word meaning “to sing and dance in a ring.” And the history of music is full of Christmas music meant for dancing.

The program Cantemus sings this December draws from the dancing spirit – the spirit of breaking loose from gravity and enjoying time with our friends. The title of our concert is “My Dancing Day,” which comes from an old Cornish carol we will sing in three different settings.

We will begin with a medieval processional carol accompanied by drums and an exquisite Renaissance motet by Peter Phillips, “O beatum et sacrosanctum diem” (O blessed and most holy day).

The middle of our program features contemplative music by Jean Berger, Herbert Howells, Igor Stravinsky, and Sergei Rachmaninoff that creates a musical manger scene, followed by Morten Lauridsen's reflective “O nata lux” and John Tavener's “Hymn to the Mother of God.”

The women of our chorus sing *Dancing Day* by John Rutter, a setting of six carols I have wanted to do for a long time. This is one of two sets with harp accompaniment in our concert.



Join Us for “My Dancing Day”

CANTEMUS CHAMBER CHORUS HOLIDAY CONCERT

*Selections by Rutter, Howells, Stravinsky, Holst,
and much more, including old favorites
performed in Cantemus' exquisite style.*

Saturday, December 7, 2002 8 p.m.

Central Congregational Church
Pleasant & Titcomb Streets, Newburyport

Sunday, December 8, 2002 4 p.m.

First Church – Congregational
Meetinghouse Green, Downtown Ipswich

In the second half of our concert, we'll kick off our shoes (metaphorically speaking) and sing some of the merriest music you've ever heard, inspired by the dance. You will hear all fourteen verses of “Tomorrow shall be my dancing day” in an original and wonderful setting by Gustav Holst, as well as “Lord of the Dance,” and Sidney Carter's arrangement of “Simple Gifts.”

You will hear an exciting, offbeat setting of “Deck the Halls” and “Wassail!” – a collection of dance-carols by John Owen Edwards – and several more carols, including the lovely Norwegian song “*Jeg er saa glad*.” We'll close our program with a virtuoso arrangement of “The 12 Days of Christmas.”

I think this is one of our most glorious programs ever, and I hope to see you there! 🎵



Massachusetts Cultural Council

*Cantemus is funded in part by the
Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency,
and by grants from the Hamilton-Wenham,
Ipswich, and Newburyport Cultural Councils,
local agencies which are supported by the MCC.*

What Is Cantemus?

Founded in 1982, Cantemus (Latin for "Let us sing") is a nonprofit organization composed of about 35 voices from across the North Shore of Massachusetts. The group is dedicated to the performance of music composed for chamber chorus. Its repertoire ranges from medieval and Elizabethan to baroque, classical, romantic, and contemporary music from around the world.

Board of Directors 2002-2003

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Advisor

cantemusnews

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Priscilla March

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Raleigh Design

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All concerts are
handicapped accessible.



Large print concert
programs are available.

Sunday Concerts in Ipswich!

Those of you who used to come to our concerts at Christ Church in Hamilton will want to note our new "Sunday" location.

On Sunday, December 8 at 4:00 PM we will perform in downtown Ipswich at First Church (Congregational) on Meetinghouse Green. It's just a few miles north up Route 1A from Hamilton. We're looking forward to seeing you there in December and in May! 🎵

Cantemus Gathers the "Best of the Best" to Showcase Excellence

As the November issue goes to press, plans are underway for Cantemus' third annual "Best of the Best" high school chorus invitational concert. Slated for Wednesday, November 6 at 8 p.m., the event will take place at Danvers High School, 60 Cabot Road in Danvers.

Cantemus music director John Hoffacker has invited the chamber choruses from these schools to participate:

- Danvers — David Morrow, director
- Gloucester — Laurel Dodge, director
- Hamilton-Wenham Regional — Claudia Frost, director
- Landmark School — Richard Fish, director
- Peabody — Jon Simmons, director

Cantemus will also perform. Then, to conclude the evening, singers from all the school choirs and Cantemus stand side by side to perform a grand finale.

"Many local choral music teachers and students are achieving outstanding levels of excellence," said Hoffacker. "Our 'Best of the Best' concert provides an occasion to showcase their accomplishments and to share ideas."

There are added benefits of collaborative concerts such as this, said Hoffacker. "Students can experience the rewards of performing for a broader audience and, we hope, be motivated to further their involvement in choral music after graduating. The audience hears the best of our local choirs, including choirs made up of young singers they may not already know.

"This is the second time that Hamilton-Wenham and Landmark are participating in our Best of the Best, and it is a tribute to their outstanding directors,

Claudia Frost and Richard Fish. Each of these schools offers a different academic program, and students have wonderfully rich opportunities.

"Jon Simmons at Peabody and David Morrow at Danvers lead very strong, established choral programs. It will be a real pleasure to have them on this concert for the first time. And in Gloucester, Laurel Dodge is restoring the choirs to excellence. I believe this is their first public performance outside Gloucester."

For more information about Cantemus' "Best of the Best" concerts, call 1-888-CHORUS-1. 🎵



Composition Competition Marks Cantemus' 20th Anniversary

To celebrate the occasion of its 20th anniversary, Cantemus is sponsoring a choral composition competition, whose winner will receive \$1,000. The competition is open to undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in degree programs at New England colleges and universities during the 2002-2003 academic year. Submissions must be postmarked by February 15, 2003.

"Cantemus has traditionally included contemporary compositions in its programming," said John Hoffacker, music director. "To celebrate our second decade of performing eclectic and adventurous choral music, and as part of our educational mission, offering a competition to promising composers seemed a perfect fit." Cantemus will premiere the winning composition in an upcoming concert.

Four-part (SATB) entries may be in any language; be three to 10 minutes long; be written to be unaccompanied or with up to eight instruments. "We wanted to give entrants as much freedom as possible in their submissions," Hoffacker said. Full details about the competition submission requirements are available on Cantemus' Web site: www.cantemus.org.

Entries will be judged by three prominent choral conductors, and winners will be announced at Cantemus' "Immortal Fire" concerts on May 10 and 11. 🎵

You Asked...

In an effort to make buying Cantemus tickets more convenient, we've been asked to start accepting credit cards. Our treasurer, Bill Gelwick, talked to our bank, but the equipment rental charge, monthly fees, percentage of ticket price plus another per-charge fee are beyond our budget at this time.

"We appreciate hearing your ideas," said Gelwick, "and will continue to seek ways to make your Cantemus experiences even better, when we can."

Cantemus concert tickets are available the day of the concert at the door, unless the concert is sold out. To be sure of a seat, we recommend buying your tickets in advance (at significant savings) from a Cantemus member or from one of these ticket outlets: The Book Shop in Beverly Farms, Nazir's Fine Jewelry in Hamilton, Bruni's Market in Ipswich, and Newburyport Printmaker in Newburyport. 🎵



Spring Preview ▶▶▶

Mark Your Calendar for "Immortal Fire"

*Presented by Cantemus –
the North Shore's Virtuoso Chamber Chorus*

Experience eclectic and exquisite music by
Britten (*Hymn to Saint Cecilia*), Ravel (*Trois chansons*),
Bernstein (*Chichester Psalms*),
Fine (*Songs from Alice in Wonderland*), and more.

Saturday, May 10, 2003 8:00 p.m.
Central Congregational Church, Newburyport
Sunday, May 11, 2003 4:00 p.m.
First Church – Congregational, Ipswich



CANTEMUS
Small Chorus. Grand Sound.

Please make
checks payable
to **Cantemus**
and mail this
form to:

**P.O. Box 784
Ipswich, MA
01938**

Cantemus Order/Contribution Form

As you already know, funding for arts organizations in Massachusetts has suffered tremendously as a result of state budget cuts. Cantemus' support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council has been cut in half this fiscal year and we don't anticipate that funding level to change in the near future. Grant funding cuts make contributions from our individual fans even more critical than in the past. Please consider supporting Cantemus by making a tax-deductible contribution. We'll continue to do our part by making your Cantemus concert experiences unforgettable!

- I am enclosing my tax-deductible contribution of _____.
- I'd like to have my name added to the Cantemus mailing list.
- Please add my friend below to the Cantemus mailing list:

- I'm interested in sponsoring a performance of a specific work(s). Please describe:

- I'd like to purchase ____ (number) of the Cantemus "**Joy Shall be Yours**" CD (s)
(\$15 per CD plus \$2.50 shipping per order).

Total amount enclosed: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ E-Mail: _____



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Ipswich, MA 01938

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Susan Nash

Dear Friends:

Hold a party — get free concert tickets!

As Cantemus heads towards its 20th anniversary, we've decided that this is the year to cultivate our audiences so we can make that milestone a huge success. Because you're reading this, it means you're already one of our fans. But we need more of you!

You may not know that one of the state's cost-saving measures this year was to cut funding of the arts by 62 percent. Cantemus's grant was **cut in half**. The easiest way for us to overcome this loss of income is to sell more tickets to all our concerts and to increase our mailing list so we can fill the house. So...

Here's a festive holiday idea for you: Combine a party with a Cantemus Holiday concert! If you hold a dinner party (or drinks, or desserts, whatever) on December 7 or 8, **we will give you one free ticket** (worth \$20 at the door) for every four tickets you buy, or act as middleman to buy, for your friends. Buy eight tickets, **we'll give you two free tickets** (worth \$40 at the door). And your friends' tickets, at \$12, are **40 percent off the "door" price!** All we want from you is your friends' names and addresses, so we can let them know about future concerts.

Many fans tell us that the December Cantemus concert kicks off their holiday season. We hope that by rewarding you with free tickets, we can entice you to share the spirit with a group of your friends. Believe me, it's thrilling for the audience as well as the singers when there's a full house. Please help us fill the halls in December! Happy Holidays!

— Susan Nash
Cantemus President



How It Works:

Your friends' names and mailing addresses
(attach separate sheet if necessary):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ tickets at \$12 each
(special advance sale price).

Give this form and payment to a Cantemus singer you know, or mail to: Cantemus Treasurer, 54 Ober Street, Beverly, MA 01915. Phone: 978-927-3755.